

By Roger Sale

It would not do to ask: "who knows all this?" Obviously many do, and Emerson is one of those writers who, as C. S. Lewis said of Spenser, "do not lose adherents once gained." I have yet to meet a man who says it is *useful* to like *Some Versions of Puritans*. But, in America at least, it is *useful* to feel they can ignore or ignore with impunity. Without fear of being out of step. Without fear of being out of step. In the ways of the American academy, where the silliest and most solemn pieces of trivia can be called "important" in order that the whole mass will not suddenly be found lacking in oxygen, Emerson is frequently resented with in an aside or a footnote as a sampling of the kind of stuff that has kept a hundred residents of the town of Andover as many as ninety who had not read a word of Emerson in the past

The *Gardners'* *The God* approached is the more successful of the two. It is a poem-by-poem series of explications. No effort is made to build an argument about Empson's career as a poet or about the achievement as a whole; most of the time a poem is pronounced successful if it can be successfully

Man is a conscious creature, struggling to comprehend what always escapes him. His mind is both his "glory" (the "capo" worn by wise Solomon, called in Empson's note a "priest-king") and his burden; man the worker and man the scientist both wear an "over-all", as, fancifully, does Solomon in his role as temple builder (1 Kings vi). Also, by virtue of his mental powers, man is always

Its underlying unity (Emerson's poetry as a whole) comes from two factors. One is Emerson's rhythm, a characteristically grave yet immensely flexible iambic pentameter which gives his utterance an air both timeless and individual; the frequent compression of these pentameters within strictly rhymed three- and four-line stanzas results in a

If "pervasive pessimism" is not the point about Empson's poetry, then "his philosophy" is not the point of his criticism, and the trouble with the Morrissey book is that it seems all too willing to let Empson elude it as it pursues the "philosophy." It works almost entirely by trying to isolate Empson's position by means of quotations from the critics. Crispin Richards, with the Chicago Aristocrats, and Leavis, as Morris perfectly rightly insists, Empson has always been a rationalist in outlook eager to make poetry less illogical, graphic and more logical, to sense out the essence of common normative feeling, so that some of his paraphrases in *Seven Types of Ambiguity* to the recent textual

What would satisfy Norris is a "definition" of "The Garden's" richness and/or of the "plausible logic of the Pastoral." Anything less is evidence of Empson's "sceptical and self-qualifying habit" of mind.

That Empson is not always sceptical and self-qualifying is clear enough from the previous chapter in *Pastoral*, on Shakespeare's 94th sonnet. There he rises to astonishing lyric heights that also reveal, should the first two chapters of the book have failed to do so, a "plausi-

It is one thing to say that Empson is rational, interested in recreating poetic statements in prose; it is more telling and more important to ask what this reveals for Empson as a critic. The rationality and objectivity of wisdom, result. His towering rages against the sordidity of the English Lit have seemed not only embarrassing but irrelevant to many because they did not admit what he was saying. His attitude, or "critical position" is not just some slot in a line-up of theoretical positions. But a rational attitude towards life. To be a rationalist is to have a belief in the permanent truths are, and how they have been

To make such an allusion to Dr Johnson is, I hope, to hint at how far wide of the mark Norris is even when he is making true statements, as he does much of the time. Empson's criticism of the "loose" criticism that Johnson was, no more a theoretician, a taker of positions, either. There are, though, five twentieth-century readers of Hummel who are not likely to be very far from Johnson on rights and for reasons Empson himself has stated in *The Structure of Complex Words*. It is a pity Empson will never enjoy Johnson's status, because his is the closest distance there is to Johnson in this century, a person of quirks and jokes, a writer of deep staying sustenance. Since this is not the eighteenth century, since Empson has always been understood to be the closest distance there is to that could hear him rightly, he let himself accentuate the quirks, the jokes, and the antagonisms at the expense of his grand broad usefulness. It is hard to know, thus, how to honour him. I think Norris's book is a very salutary way.

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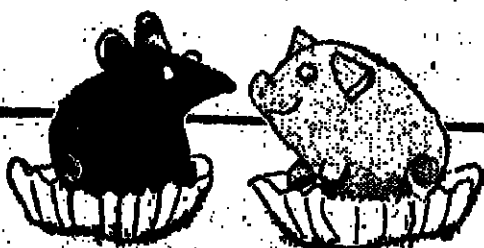
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PATRICIA MILES:

A Disturbing Influence
Hamish Hamilton, £3.75.
(241 100224)

The interest in these three new novels by acknowledged writers lies in the secondary world the reader is invited to enter. Catherine Storr, whose representation of the hinterland of children's thought and feelings is best remembered in *Mimicry*, offers a dark idyll in an elegant white house where a group of undergraduates go to read during an early spring holiday. Withdrawn from the world, at the mercy of their shifting sexual feelings and relationships, they work out their salvation with such diligence as is in them by facing fear, anger, grief, love and thoughts of death. The general atmosphere is disconcerting and claustrophobic. The book is bitterly cold—a kind of *Forest of Arden* in winter. The reader is unprepared

for the host's unexplained paranoid alienation. The climax comes after a growing sense of menace, but every action in the story seems to be controlled from the outside, especially the final moves that avert disaster. There is a hint of atavistic symbolism, but nothing carries much conviction because the characters lack depth. They rarely show the true friendship that is the blessing as well as the bane of this uncertain time in the lives of the young.

In Bette Greene's earlier novel, *Summer of my German Soldier*, the reader endured with Patty Borgen the stifling cruelty of an Arkansas small-town witch-hunt when she helped Anton, a prisoner of war, to escape. In this story she chases Anton's ghost back to Germany where she hopes to find ideal adults who could love her for herself, as Anton did before he was shot. The trip is a disaster. But Roger, the Parisian hero, brings Patty to an acceptance of herself.

Patty is a richly complicated character, but her creator, in taking her away from the situation that gave her depth and credibility, thrusts her down in an American's view of Paris. The European context is to be the "vaster and more varied" world that Anton presented to Patty as an ideal. The scene is clouded by Patty's obsessions. Ruth, the wise Negro servant, has to be left behind, and Roger, with little scope for development of a

personality of his own, has to bear the burden of Patty's self-realisation. Only the tone of the telling, a mix of Jewish humour, is retained from the first book.

Like all the other chief characters, Andrew Gifford in *A Disturbing Influence* is sensitive and lonely when ideals cross with the real world. In this case the town of New Town on the other side of the motorway from Andrew's family home, vaguely liberal middle-class stretch, stretches its tolerance to include pop festivals but insists on standards. The disturbing influence is Anita, next-door, and then a strange girl who turns out to be her sister. Anita's family is stereotyped, less, trafficking in forged banknotes and pop-group glamour. The girl has a well-heeled plot but the examination is there too. The poet lifts it right out of the ordinary. The shifting kaleidoscope of the hero's thought, his ability to be fair and honest with himself even when he needs, but wants to escape from, the comforting support of his elders, all give this novel a rare clarity, while at the same time suggesting the ambivalence and ambiguities that complicate the thought processes, especially of the gifted.

Each of these books has more than one theme; but for the most part, the characters are in flight, not from poverty or evil or degradation, nor yet towards a little creative handiwork or art, but only from the adults who begat them. For Andrew and the students in the white house, the flight is temporary; for Patty final. Yet nothing betides from the adult world to tempt her into it or to suggest that she need not be entirely abandoned. Perhaps the next move in the novel for adolescents is to give the adult another chance.

Ann Thwaite

Margaret Meek

No easy answers

BERNARD ASHLEY:

A Kind of Wild Justice
Oxford University Press, £2.95.
(27147 1)

JOAN LINGARD:

The Gooseberry
Hamish Hamilton, £3.75.
(241 10023 2)

A Kind of Wild Justice borrows its title from Francis Bacon's essay on revenge. That is what the book is about: Ronnie Webster's revenge on the world for what it has done to him: his rotten mum, his stupid dad, the violent Bradshaws, the school, Kingsland. They'd all done bloody marvels for him, between the lot of them, hadn't they? There wasn't one of them he could trust. The book is pretty convincing evidence for those of us (not just soft-hearted social workers) who believe that kids get into trouble not because of original sin but because of what has been done to them and left undone.

Ronnie has nothing good for him. For a start, he can't read; and this is crucial to the story. His father uses him as cover (dad making his son to the football match) in a smash and grab raid. His mother plants one of his easily identifiable word cards in the getaway car in order to get his dad put away so she can go off with the man she fancyes, one of the Bradshaws, a Kray-like pal who actually engineered the raid in the first place and have many other nasty plans up their sleeves, including an illegal immigration racket.

Caught up in the whole nasty mess is the one other child character in the book, Manjit Mirza, a Sikh girl who shares Ronnie's remedial reading lessons. For the girl there are, realistically, no easy, happy answers. For Ronnie, the one he can trust (Charlie Whitehead, the driver of the school coach) and the strength and wit to do "something good, to the real world". To save Charlie's shop, the Bradshaws, and many people in the East End, sleep, eat, and fight.

It is a good story, complex but not difficult to follow, and surprisingly convincing most of the time, except perhaps for the language. Not even Bernard Ashley can that flow through the head of an inarticulate and illiterate kid like Ronnie. Still, it will do, and many children from quite different backgrounds will feel a stab of sympathy and identification with Ronnie.

Joan Lingard is still probably best known for her Belfast books, but *The Gooseberry*, like many of her recent books, is set in Scotland. The Gooseberry is Ellen Ferguson,

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Kestrel Books, £3.25. (7226 5190 1)

MARJORIE DARKE:

A Long Way To Go
Kestrel Books, £3.50. (7226 54855)

John Gordon's new book, *The Waterfall Box*, has the ingredients of excitement: in a village isolated by a canal and a wall of houses, a mysterious antique dealer schemes to get hold of a casket and a flask which have been passed down from the 16th century. The book also has the trap-door of subtlety: Brant, whose father owns the casket, goes to live with his girl-cousin, Sandy, whose mother owns the flask, and John Gordon charts the progress of their relationship.

The strange story of the casket and flask is intended to complement the theme of this developing

relationship. In practice, however, the two elements of the book act against each other. The fate of the characters is enigmatic, but the interaction of the characters, the more prosaic teenage romance, is to be patient with the long accounts of Brant's reactions to Sandy's sexual teasing when his grief for his parents—who are killed a quarter of the way through the book—merits only half a page of description. The final effect is one of insubstantiality, or a sketch for a powerful book with neither the incidents nor the characters to flesh it out.

A Long Way To Go, by Marjorie Darke, on the other hand, is crammed with incidents and characters. Luke, a coloured boy from Poplar, is a conscientious objector who faces the problem of conscription in the First World War. Bella, his twin sister, is full of patriotic enthusiasm and works in a munitions

factory. Around these two move a cast of characters, from Poplar to the trenches, bringing the war and its difficulties to vigorous, immediate life. The book's faults, like its virtues, are those of exuberance. Side issues—the colour problem, women's suffrage—are brought in because of a curious authorial indulgence: Luke and Bella are the descendants of *Midnight*, and Bella's friend at the munitions factory is Emily Palmer from *A Question of Courage*. These links with the author's earlier books are fun, but they tend to blur the main theme of the book. The quandaries of war are so strongly expressed that the Armistice at the end provides only a facile solution. Nevertheless, the book is illuminated and enlivened by Marjorie Darke's two great gifts: for spirited narrative and for evoking the rich texture of past life as it was lived by ordinary people.

Gillian Cross

Enigmatic journey

LEON GARFIELD:

The Confidence Man
Kestrel Books, £3.95. (7226 54073)

Obscurity for its own sake is fortunately very rare in children's literature, but to be unwittingly obscure is still reprehensible, and too often passes without comment: no adult reader cares to admit that he cannot understand a book written for people half his age, particularly if the author is respected and admired, as Leon Garfield most certainly is.

His latest novel, *The Confidence Man*, is an allegory which, after two long readings, I still understood only in part. It tells of the journey of a group of eighteenth-century German Protestants from persecu-

tion at home to freedom in America, and at a much deeper level it tells of the journey of a boy's soul. The boy is Hans Ruppert, fourteen-year-old shoemaker's son from a street inhabited entirely by small tradesmen—a Protestant ghetto in an aggressively Catholic town. The story begins in vintage Garfield style with the decapitation of a Communist soldier. Though the Rupperts know it to have been an accident, this gruesome death is fuel to the Catholic fire. Reprisals are inevitable: Protestant homes are burnt and it becomes necessary to escape.

Into this scene of crisis comes Captain von Stumpfel, the mysterious black lawyer. It is he who persuades the whole street to undertake the formidable flight to Virginia, where he promises them peace and freedom to build a new

life. It is on his identity that the entire story must hinge. Is he God or the Devil, saviour or confidence man; swindler or Gentleman of Death? Clues are thrown out in quick and crazy succession. The evidence mounts up in a manner which would confuse a High Court judge. Blandly the blunt exerts that "all is finally explained." To me it is not, nor, I suspect, will the average fourteen-year-old reader easily solve the book's central enigma.

The actual account of the long journey does not compensate for the elusiveness of its underlying truth. The narrative is often tortuous, there are too many minor characters and Garfield's exuberant Dickensian style is inhibited by the device of letting author and hero take turn and turn about as storyteller. Despite its faults, however, this is a significant and rewarding book the more so because of the demands it makes on its reader.

Ann Evans

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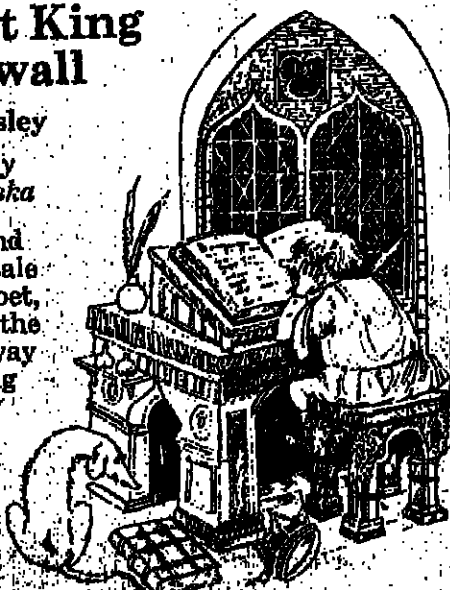
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The number of experimental novels in children's literature is not large, probably because young readers, even more than old ones, quickly get impatient when familiar signposts are taken away and the writing looks like getting tough. An Aidan Chambers can manage to get away with some daring short-cuts in his later novels through the exceptional clarity and appeal of his prose, but in language that is fascinating rather than funny, self-conscious instead of eloquent, and when it tries to be erotic only managing to seem doggedly salacious.

By contrast, M. E. Kerr's *Gentlehands* is very readable, and takes on the theme of a rich American girl. Yet just as everything seems set fair for a pleasant little trip into an ocean of wish-fulfillment, faced with occasional surface realism, the story unaccountably decides to sink itself. The chief culprit is a totally unconvincing grandfather, who turns out to be an even more unbelievable former concentration camp guard on a madish and preposterous note on which to end an otherwise unexceptionable piece of writing.

Nicholas Tucker

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Jan Mark's new novel is as unlike her prize-winning *Thunder and Lightning* and *Under the Autumn Garden* as Earth is unlike Moon. Yet there is something about the trio of central characters that resembles the outsiders in the earlier novels: and something familiar, too, about the way love finds uncharted paths in order to express itself and change the human pattern. But whereas Jan Mark's first two novels were stories set in modern times for children, *The Ennead* is a parable for the mature.

Erato is an island off the planet Euterpe, one of the nine planets (Ennead) in the solar system of Memnoyne. Erato is made of stone, and it is a mine of minerals from Euterpe, itself the repository for colonists from Earth who "fight in the death for the means to live". Society on Erato is corrupt, parasitic, heartless and orderly.

So when the malformed young Isaac, servant to Theodore (is Theodore his half-brother?) imports a sculptor, Eleanor, from Euterpe into Theodore's house, not only must she work, she must also conform—for her own sake, as well as for Isaac's. Conformity means dressing like a woman (Eleanor habitually wears shirt, trousers and boots),

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The intellectual reader will doubtless pick up Greek and Biblical references, will ponder on the origin of Erato's people and consider, if he is so inclined, the social and political implications of this new world in the not so distant future in outer space. But he will also surely be moved to tears by the fate of the lovers, especially that of the bearded patient, Moshe, hounded even from stony Erato. *The Ennead* is an extraordinary novel; science fiction, romance, satire, it has power, glory and, by contrast, shafts of dazzling light thrown onto the baseness of the human condition. A demanding book for the thoughtful reader.

Elaine Moss

Designs from the past

JANE CURRY:
The Birdstones
Kestrel Books. £2.95.
(7226 5345 X)
The Bassumtyte Treasure
Kestrel Books. £2.95.
(7226 5437 5)

The Birdstones continues Jane Curry's attempt to evoke an ancient America past, transporting pre-Columbian pursuers and pursued into the modern West Virginia town of Apple Lock. To anyone who has not read *The Daybreakers*, the large—and curiously introduced—cost may be bewildering. But just as the book is about to disappear completely behind an unusually impenetrable hedge of American slang and school jargon, twin plots emerge—

and when we are not watching Ms Curry work them out, good plus they are. How to return Dalea and the others to the sub-Tolkien-speaking past civilization of Abolice is a problem which becomes mixed up with the schoolgirls' creation of a fictitious classmate, and in the background, casual details bring the town and the school to life. Yet we have chapter headings like "The Plot Thickens", an abundance of "he froze in his tracks", unoriginality, and, worse, a somewhat disingenuous fumbling at key points in the plot.

With *The Bassumtyte Treasure*, we again have a workmanlike book, this time speculating in English history. Boxleton House is threatened with sale to an Arab millionaire, this being 1978 and Tommy, arrived from America bearing the family ruin, passed down from Mary Studd's time, sets out to save the day. And to get through puns and mezes, secret rooms, windfalls, decent adults, whimsical vicars, and touches of Tom's *Midnight Garden*, Jane Curry just—but only just—avoids the tawdriness; it is almost as if she had found a charming Gloucestershire house, with charming people, and charming plot-ends lying around, and this is the result. If all this sounds condemnatory, let it not be thought that this book (and *The Birdstones*) is not energetic and interesting and, on occasion, gripping. It is merely that well-meaning recycling of material cannot earn a wholehearted recommendation.

Peter Hunt

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Looking and learning

By Julia Briggs

Nothing is more evocative of Christmas morning than a big picture book wrapped in shiny paper. The *Orlando* and *Babar* books of my childhood were so large that they never fitted on the shelf, and the double-sized of *Celesteville* positively invited a small person to step inside. Nowadays books are uniformly smaller, but the best of them still invite participation of one kind or another. John Burningham in *Would you rather...* has had the inspired notion of taking the sort of unlikely alternatives one hears proposed in the playground and putting them into a book that did a dance at school... your dad had a row in a café?... and bringing them to life through his stylish, yet fascinatingly detailed and informative drawings. He has perfectly judged his audience's tastes, and the result is wholly delightful, a book not to be read so much as discussed—you have to go through it several times at a sitting so that all the possible permutations ("...help an imp be naughty by sneaking a stew...") can be explored. Like all really good books, it is imbued with a simple delight in living and imagining.

Unforced freedom of imagination is also manifest in Mr and

Mrs Smith's *The Long Drive*, which relates, in the minimum of words and the maximum of pictures, the adventures of three soft toys who tumble into the sea, fall down the continental shelf, see shoals of fishes, seahorses, mermaids, an octopus and, oddly, fry fish fingers on the sea bed. The intense colours persuasively convey a sense of depth and the book has a real integrity and originality of vision.

Too much attention paid to the young consumers can weaken inspiration, producing dull hybrid full of trendy gestures. Three new books about *Eric the Wild Car* rely on the assumption that children love furry toys and anthropomorphized cars—Eric is both—while their parents look for "responsible" attitudes to public issues, so Eric replaces private with public transport and rescues fish from oil-polluted waters. I prefer the traditional animal fantasy of Jan Wahl's *Doctor Rabbit's Foundling* in which an abandoned tadpole grows into a hyperactive frog and ultimately hops away into the night. Charming pictures, only slightly sentimental, enforce the final suggestion that loss may be the price we pay for love, a truism closer to experience than any number of animated cars can embody.

Neither a story nor a picture book, Brian Wildsmith's *What the Moon*

Rhymes without reason

PEGGY BLAKELY:
The Great Big Book of Nursery Rhymes
A and C. Black. £4.95.
(7356 1644 X)

MARGARET TARRANT:
Nursery Rhymes
Ward Lock. £3.95.
(7083 5770 1)

CHARLES FOLKARD:
The Land of Nursery Rhyme
Dent. £2.95.
(450 06872 5)

CYNTHIA MITCHELL:
Halloween Hecate and Other Rhymes to Skip to
Heinemann. £2.50.
(434 95140 4)

ELIZABETH FAIRFOLME and PAMELA POWELL:
The Seals of Park Lane Seek a beau for Elaine
Shearer Press. £1.30.
(94980 21 9)

The success of a book of nursery rhymes depends heavily on its pictures. The rhymes are strange, and often obscure (why else are they so intriguing?) and the pictures must help to bring them to life and give them meaning without pre-empting the imaginative pleasure of the listener. Frank French's illustrations to Peggy Blakely's collection achieve this. The book is very simple, with one full-page picture to each rhyme, and this seems to give children

pleasure in itself. It is the closest challenger I have seen to Raymond Briggs's *Mother Goose*, though it aims at simplicity rather than comprehensiveness.

Given this modern success, why would anyone want to reprint much older collections? Margaret Tarrant's pictures are pleasant and nostalgic, but this is a book you would probably rather find in your grandmother's attic than buy for a three-year-old today. And Dent's reprinting of the collection illustrated by Charles Folkard equally is not one I would choose instead of either of the modern ones mentioned. It does, however, include many unfamiliar rhymes, and it might be a good additional source for connoisseurs.

Kileen Browne's pictures for *Halloween Hecate* are wonderful. This is a book of rhymes to skip to, a kind of them work better as poems than as jingles to move to, which shows that it is very difficult to write a contribution to a traditionally oral enterprise, but skip-pers will be pleased to be taken seriously. The pictures, women's movement please note, show at least as many boys skipping as they do girls.

The Seals of Park Lane, which is also in verse though not printed as such, is a book of rhymes to skip to, a kind of them work better as poems than as jingles to move to, which shows that it is very difficult to write a contribution to a traditionally oral enterprise, but skip-pers will be pleased to be taken seriously. The pictures, women's movement please note, show at least as many boys skipping as they do girls.

Ruth Hawthorn

Snow is a little disappointing. A series of contrasting images are intended to encourage discrimination between different characteristics, yet the didactic purpose is too obvious, and I miss the zany comedy of *Pythons' Party*, for example. But no one else could have drawn the picture of darkness on the last page.

Several new books refurbish old stories or verses. Tony Ross has updated *Little Red Riding Hood* with rather too many shrieks at the adult reader over his shoulder; adult readers and ironies only seem to make grandmothers' miraculous emergence from the wolf that much less plausible. Hardly changed at all except for the excision of racial overtones are the *Ten Little Bad Boys* who all come to different sticky ends, including—topically?—marriage. Rodney Pappé has drawn them in line and colour that seem a little flat and muddy by the standards of his own best work. Owen Wood has decorated a sumptuous edition of *The Owl and the Pussycat* in which the characters are hedged in by beautifully drawn flowers and insects, and "ribbons and bibbons on every side". Crowded as a Victorian parlour, these elaborate collections contrast sharply with Lear's own spare and scratchy line drawings, and their richness may appeal more readily to adult stomachs. Finally Stanley Holloway's unforgettable recitation of *The Lion and the Unicorn* has been reprinted in the style of a snapshot album. The pictures are uninspired, but the verses are still blackly hilarious.

The relative importance of the pictures often tempts publishers to bring over picture books from abroad; inevitably some of these books are worth the effort, and occasionally there may be more difficulties than immediately meet the eye. Ezra Jack Keats's *The Trip*, otherwise most engaging, exemplifies one such problem in making the Atlantic crossing. Lonely Louis finds a place in an imaginary trip through a shoebox scene he has made, until his friends arrive to play "trick or treat" the halloween ritual familiar to small Americans and fans of *Pennies*, but not yet naturalized here. The obvious translation problems beset Tove Jansson's *The Dangerous Journey*, the story of Susanne's dream, like *Journey with Snuffin* and the *Hemulen*, by balloon, through snow and past the Croke that archetypal happy valley inhabited by Moons. It was probably a mistake to attempt to tell the story in an oddly top-heavy stanza that results in several metrical and syntactic awkwardnesses, while the

JOHN BURNINGHAM: *Would you rather...* Jonathan Cape. £3.50. (224 01635 0)
MRS AND MRS SMITH: *The Long Drive* Jonathan Cape. £2.95. (224 01614 8)

JOHN SHERRIDAN: *Eric the Wild Car* (85685 513 8). *Eric and the Lost Planes* (85685 529 4). *Eric and the Mad Inventor* (85685 527 6). Woodpecker Books.

JAN WAHL: *Dr Rabbit's Foundling*. World's Work. £2.50. (437 84180 4)

BRIAN WILDSMITH: *What the Moon Saw*. Oxford University Press. £3.95. (19 279724 7)
TONY ROSS: *Little Red Riding Hood*. Andersen Press. £2.50. (905478 37 3)



One of David Anstey's striking illustrations for *Before the Harvest Came* by David Skilling (Cassell, £2.95, 304 30213 9).

verbal idiosyncrasies of Roh were more satisfactorily retained in the spookier Elizabeth Parich's translations. But nothing can spoil the exuberant, atmospheric paintings that remind us of Tove Jansson's exceptional skills as an artist, as well as author.

Remarkable in both these fields is the young American William Pène du Bois, whose *The Forbidden Forest* is as delightful to look at as it is amusing to read. A lightweight boxer, a kangaroo called Lady Adelaide who sports a motor veil and a bulldog bring the Great War to an end by accidentally setting off a shell that, after wreaking havoc on a number of intervening objects, finally strikes a huge German ammunition dump. Meanwhile Lady Adelaide faces a German firing squad. The elaborately constructed and controlled farce is masterfully handled and the setting is treated with a kind of nostalgic comedy, such as one might encounter in the cinema. This is an endearing and highly original book. To end on a seasonal note, Astrid Lindgren in *Lotta's Christmas Surprise* shows her usual humorous insight into the feelings of young children; it is pleasantly told and cheerfully illustrated.

JOHN BURNINGHAM: *Would you rather...* Jonathan Cape. £3.50. (224 01635 0)
EOWAN LEAM: *The Owl and the Pussycat and Other Nonsense*. Andre Deutsch. £3.50. (233 97018 5)

MARRIOT EDGAR: *The Lion and Albert*. Methuen. £3.95. (416 58450 0)

ESRA JACK KEATS: *The Trip*. Hamish Hamilton. £3.25. (241 00035 6)

TOVE JANSSON: *The Dangerous Journey*. Ernest Benn. £2.95. (510 00038 X)
WILLIAM PENE DU BOIS: *The Forbidden Forest*. Chatto and Windus. £3.95. (7011 2396 6)
ASTRID LINGRENN: *Lotta's Christmas Surprise*. Methuen. £2.95. (416 866 905)

Sound pretexts

STELLA FARRIS:
The Magic Bubble Pipe
Chatto and Windus. £1.50.
(7011 2341 9)

STELLA FARRIS:
The Magic Castle
Chatto and Windus. £1.50.
(7011 2348 9)

SANDY RABINOWITZ:
What's Happening to Daisy?
Harper and Row. £3.95.
(06 024834 3)

ALICE GOYDER:
Party in Catland (7011 2349 4).
Holiday in Catland (7011 23486).
Christmas in Catland (7011 2347 8).
Chatto and Windus. 99p.

ALICE and MARTIN PROVENSEN:
A Peaceable Kingdom
Kestrel. £2.95.
(7226 5525 8)

JANET and ALLAN AHLBERG:
Each Peach Pear Plum
Kestrel. £2.95.
(7226 5335 2)

CYNTHIA MITCHELL:
Playtime
Heinemann. £2.50.
(434 94364 9)

The Magic Castle and *The Magic Bubble Pipe* rely on the gimmickry of unfolding pictures, but this is not enough to conceal the books' emptiness, and the price is high for the small pleasure. *What's Happening to Daisy?* has been produced to illustrate the birth of a foal, which it does satisfactorily, but the pictures and text are otherwise undistinguished; a harmless book, but not necessary. Much the same is true of the three *Catland* books and we have guinea for the rediscovery of them. The pictures are uneven, the text uniformly insipid. They are quite pleasant, but there are so many pleasant little books, and childhood is short.

The others are more solid. The Shaker background of *A Peaceable Kingdom* will mean nothing to British children; if the little "mottoes" were legible they would be porphyria. The number of animals by each letter makes its usefulness as an ABC doubtful; it is a curiosity—never a recommendation—to children, who may be deterred by its strangeness. Each *Each Peach Pear Plum* has nursery characters playing hide-and-seek from picture to picture; the plot is minimal, the ending comfortable, the whole fun. But Cynthia Mitchell's *Playtime* is a delightfully solid, energetic children romp their way through the book, acting out the pictures that form the text with spirit and imagination. Thoroughly enjoyable; highly recommended.

Joy Chant

The Bazaar Stall

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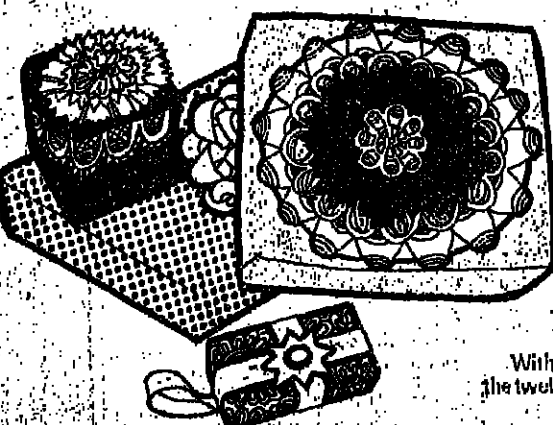
JOAN RENDLE
The craft of preserving flowers, leaves or seed heads and turning them into pictures, bookends, paperweights or not-plain is the child in the adult. This book is the author of *Your Book of Corn Eaten*. With drawings by Yvonne Stargen. £2.50

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Intended to help young judo players to teach themselves effectively, this book assumes no previous experience but takes its readers through the techniques and ideas of this Olympic sport, with photographs. £2.50

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With the two stories together,

known to the Bagthorpes who are subject of the second story.

In the home, Mr Bagthorpe fears his family is the laughing stock of England, and who can blame him? The causes of his distraught state are recounted with gusto in the latest contribution to the Bagthorpe saga, where the narrative pursues a lively course between surrealism and farce. Only an excessively studious eleven-year-old, like the Bagthorpes' horrid cousin Luke, will fail to find this story amusing.

Eve Rice's first-person narrator is a child of large vocabulary and little common sense who enters the help of one brother to elucidate the doings of the other. Potter, who should be studying medicine at Harvard, is seen behaving oddly in New York. However, in spite of a promising beginning the story does not grip, and the moment of illumination is anticlimactic.

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The reader's skill

ELLEN COLWELL:

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JAN WAHL:

The Pleasant Fieldmouse Storybook

World's Work £2.60
(437 84179 0)

ELIZABETH CLARK:

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(340 22512 2)

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Illustrated by Quentin Blake
Dent £2.95
(0460 06871 7)

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Magical morals

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Allen and Unwin £4.95
(04 823151 7)

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With the two stories together,

known to the Bagthorpes who are subject of the second story.

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Patricia Grant

Domestic comedy for children has entered a new phase. It is no longer sufficient to put out a succession of snobbish, absent-minded or sprightly old relatives and call them eccentric. Eccentricity now flourishes on an altogether more dramatic scale, although it is possible that Helen Cresswell's fictional family has reached this tendency to its limit. The even tone of this novel, however, is a quality

being read to can be one of the most memorable of childhood experiences, the perfect mixture of the active and the passive, the receptive and the imaginative (with a pinch of the sleepy, at bedtime). Ellen Colwell's *Humblepuppy and Other Stories* for Telling gives copious notes on how each story should be read, the time it will take, the effects it may have, and the reader's tone and attitude. "Tell the story easily, as though Peter was someone you knew," she suggests. "Tell the story quietly almost in confidence. As you tell the story, see it as a series of pictures." "This is a tragic story and it should not be toned down. I believe that children need 'roughage'." The reader's skill (tone, mood, enjoyment) is so important that this advice is well worth

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Happy horrors

MARGARET TARRANT:

Fairy Tales

Ward Lock £3.95
(7063 5654 3)

RUTH MANNING-SANDERS:

Folk and Fairy Tales

Methuen £3.95
(416 86270 5)

LAURENCE HOUSMAN:

Moonlight and Fairland

Cape £3.95
(224 01416 1)

PENELOPE FARMER:

Beginnings

Creation Myths of the World
Chatto £4.25
(7011 2275 7)

Fashions in reading may come and go, but fairy tales go on for ever, and appeal to children of all ages, colours and creeds; and here, in time for Christmas, are four collections of fairy tales and a book of myths—two of which were first illustrated and published many years ago.

Margaret Tarrant's collection consists of half a dozen of the most popular stories of Perrault and the Brothers Grimm. They are well told, both simply and directly with accompanying illustrations reproduced from the originals of sixty years ago. These pictures, with their dated and rather bland charm have perhaps more appeal for the collector than the present day child, accustomed to more sophisticated fantasies. Nevertheless it is an attractive book with large clear print.

In contrast the illustrations by

ing men they call "Sparth" and then of another runaway boy, Clement Alexander, the grandson of the old Laird. Between Ella and Clement grows an intimacy that cannot exist once Clement is recognized heir and Ella becomes a servant once more.

The west coast of Scotland is the ideal setting for this story of conflicting emotions, of wild dream and bitter-sweet reality. Though dominant, the landscape is never allowed to envelop its inhabitants. Barbara Willard has done a bold thing to choose a wild setting for a story of romance spread over several generations; but she is too good a writer to let the classic cast more than a shadow over her own keen heights.

Sarah Hayes

half an hour of Professor Branestawm's magic, can testify to its quality.

In this, his second book of magic, Norman Hunter wittily sets out a number of splendid ideas of undoubted difficulty as to how to

baffle your audience and win friends. The Vanishing Lady of the title actually exists and (with practice) might be added to your repertoire. An extremely acceptable addition to the Christmas stocking of the would-be magician who has already acquired his first wand.

John Skinner

Catharine Rawlinson

THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

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Sea passages

CHARLES CAUSLEY (Compiler):

The Puffin Book of Salt-Sea Verse

Kestrel Books £4.50
(7226 5441 3)

Charles Causley's anthology of sea poems is of the kind that sets a standard for all others. Many of the expected poems are there, from "Drake's Drum" to "Look, stranger, on this island now", but not in such quantity that they clutter the book. The necessity of venturing further afield to find new ones. *The Puffin Book of Salt-Sea Verse* is a book notably free from the paratextual that characterizes so many anthologies: Mr Causley has dug deeply and zestfully into the huge resources of the English and come up with a selection that is continually original and surprising, giving the impression of an embarrassment of riches. His selections—which include "The Sea" by "On the Beach", "Yes, I'll go", "Sea-changes"—are somewhat arbitrary, and certainly the younger reader, but which make reading aloud more pleasurable for the grown up.

The last book *Beginnings* by Penelope Farmer is a compilation of the "creation myths of the world" grouped under such headings as Earth, Man, Fire and Death. It is an interesting and useful book for the adult reader and teacher containing a wide variety of myths culled from world sources, but its appeal for children is probably rather limited.

Brian Baumfield

Practical plays

Practical Puffins: Cover-ups (7226 5461 8); Presents (7226 5465 0); Constructions (7226 5462 6); Messages (7226 5462 6); Swells (7226 5462 6); Exploring (7226 5459 6); Kestrel £1.50 (paperback 60p).

Bright-looking, inexpensive little books, crammed with exciting things to make and do, sound the ideal stocking-fillers to keep the young amused during the holidays. Nor will most children under ten be disappointed in this enterprising bunch of Practical Puffin books. The subjects cover a wide range of activities, from coping with an oil sea bird, in *Exploring*, to manufacturing warts from bread and corn soup, in *Cover-ups*. The instructions are, for the most part,

Ways to baffle

NORMAN HUNTER:

The old pretenders

By Ruth Harris

ELIZABETH T. BILLINGTON: *The Randolph Caldecott Treasury* Frederick Warne, £12.50. (7232 6139 3)

CHARLES H. BENNETT: *Bennett's Fables* Chatto and Windus, £4.95. (070 11 2403 2)

BRIAN LOVE: *Play the Game* Michael Joseph, £7.30. (7181 1724 7)

FRANZ BONN: *The Children's Theatre* Kestrel/Viking, £2.95. (7226 5536 3)

LOTAR MEGGENDORFER: *The Doll's House* Kestrel/Viking, £2.95. (7226 5534 7)

Nothing is more fun than "let's pretend": it is the beginning of all the best games. Books are an aid to this pretending and the illustrator not only sets the scene and designs the costumes but, if he has the imagination, he adds to the story. Randolph Caldecott's title-page for *The Milkmaid* calls it "An old song exhibited and explained" and to exhibit and explain is exactly what he does. Maurice Sendak, in his perceptive appreciation in this book uses the word "quicken" in talking about Caldecott's work and

compares him to a conductor interpreting a score.

The Randolph Caldecott Treasury is an anthology of Caldecott's work from his early sketches in the American series left unfinished when he died in Florida at the age of forty-two, there are selections from his work as an illustrator and some of the ravishing picture books are given complete. They do not have quite the same magic when they are not in their original format, but the book contains unused drawings and great care has been taken with reproduction. Elizabeth Billington puts the artist in context, and she includes an article on the partnership between Caldecott and Edmund Evans who translated the colours and values of the watercolours into the incised lines of wood-engraving.

In 1833 Caldecott published *Some of Aesop's Fables with Modern Instances* and it seems likely that he knew Bennett's *Fables* of 1857, a book greatly admired and now reprinted for the first time from a rare hand-painted first edition. In his version Caldecott drew two illustrations, one of animals and one of humans; Bennett fused the two into a single image. His characters are simultaneously animal and man: the porcupine made with his eyes glazing quizzing a human on a spotted wooden horse and the Tortoise, rotund and self-satisfied on the steps of Guildhall, ignoring the shabby hare collapsed at his feet with a battered top hat full of plans and inventions. Bennett's *Fables* may not be a children's book, but the pictures are so engaging that few children could fail to enjoy them.

For a more formal approach to morals, parents could encourage

children to play board games, such as *The New Game of Hmannu* "Life" published in 1790 where at the fall of a die the Studious Boy at seven is advanced to the Grout at forty-two, though oddly enough the Drunkard goes back to being the Docile Boy. Brim Love in his fascinating collection makes us see the whole of life in terms of games. You can miss a turn to lament the death of Socrates or you can throw again in the Blitz because fire is extinguished according to regulations. Boards range in style from Cruikshank's "Comic Game of the Great Exhibition of 1851" to the Mondrian simplicity of "Quartette" and counters or tokens are provided. "An Eccentric Excursion to the Chinese Empire"—by steamboat, by walking, by aerial or flying machine (the year is 1848), or by railway, might well be more entertaining than watching television. To avoid introducing dice into a private family a two-to-tum, or tum may be used instead.

Board games provide a design for adventure and anyone who has played Ludo can remember the relief of getting home and the personalities of the four colours. Pop-up books are a different running ground for the imagination. *The Children's Theatre* is a peep-show into a gaudy drawing room and the tableaux acted there, with Father and Mother as Joseph and Mary and the dog as the Wolf in Little Red Riding Hood. Lotar Meggendorfer's *Doll's House* would excite anybody of any age. The detail is delightful and ingenious: the doors open and shut and there is a proper window on to the street where a maid offers refreshment to a cyclist. This is a world to revisit and to remember. The price of ownership is only £2.95.

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Words by Lewis Carroll
Music by Don Harper
Illustrations by Charles Folkard
The familiar nonsense rhymes set to inspired new music
Book £2.95
Cassette (incl VAT) £3.25
Pack Cassette and book, incl VAT £5.95

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The Great Big Book of Nursery Rhymes

Chosen by Peggy Blackley
Illustrated by Frank Francis
An essential book in every child's library—ninety-two well-loved rhymes, richly and humorously illustrated.
£4.95

Adam & Charles Black

Men beware women

By Paul Addison

BRIAN HARRISON:

Separate Spheres: The Opposition to Women's Suffrage in Britain. 274pp. Croom Helm. £9.95.

A story with half the characters left out would be such a story which has so far been written of our political history over the past century. The forces of innovation have been singled out for attention, and their ideas examined with sympathy. The forces of inertia have been neglected, and their outlook hardly explored at all. Even historians of the Conservative Party tend to focus on the Peelites and modernizing efforts of the front bench, though the chief function of the party was to protect and maintain inequalities of status and income. From the literature on the Liberals we might deduce that they were an expanding popular party led on by militant dissenters and social reformers. Little is said by comparison of the ballast of ratepayers and businessmen, and the balance of the party from becoming the vehicle of organized labour. Labour historians, it must be admitted, are an exception to the rule, for they spend a great deal of time explaining why the working classes have never lived up to socialist expectations. Right-wing labour has many analysts and quite a few sympathizers. It is the middle and upper classes whose roles have been most liable to distortion. Much has been written, for example, about Christian socialism and the anxiety of historians about the "condition of England", but what has become of the salubrious Tory person, inculcating deference and patriotism into his parishioners? The Liberal critics of Empire are familiar figures, but the Liberal Unionists remain obscure in spite of their decisive impact on events. In social and economic affairs the Liberal light has been stolen by the progressive intelligentsia campaigning for collectivism, leaving in the shadows the Treasury officials who use by now a scheme to keep public expenditure down.

For this long-sided picture there are a number of explanations, including certain gaps in source material. But the key factor is unconscious Whig history. There has been a powerful tendency among historians to select only sympathetic subjects for research, leaving the rest to take care of themselves. Most of us are so repelled by the Ian Smiths and Ian Paisleys of this world that we shy away from the task of reconstructing parallel figures in the past: even the older forms of conservatism are avoided. Yet the more we discuss the acceleration rather than the brakes, the less we grasp the system as a whole. Without the contributions of one or two contrary imaginations, including Marxists and high Tories, there would be little to observe in British politics since 1880 but a host of pressures for a more efficient

and egalitarian society. It therefore becomes difficult to account for the slow rate of change and high level of stability so characteristic of this country. Obviously we need to look at the conservative half of the equation and at the interaction of forces, and this is exactly what Brian Harrison has done in his new book. Valuable as it is on the opposition to female suffrage, *Separate Spheres* is to be welcomed first and foremost for a vigorous opening chapter arguing the case for the study of lost causes and silent majorities. The balance of research does need to be corrected, and Dr Harrison's words of criticism and advice ought to be at the elbow of every research supervisor, and read by any intending PhD student in the field. They dispose of the fallacy that good liberal history must be primarily about liberals, or good feminist history primarily about Mary Wollstonecraft and her successors.

The first resolution in favour of votes for women was moved in the House of Commons by J. S. Mill in 1867, but it was not until 1918 that the vote was granted to women over thirty, and even then it was 1928 before women were placed on a full equality with men and could vote at twenty-one. The most obvious explanation of this long-drawn-out contest would seem to be sexual conflict, finally resolved by male concession. On this assumption Mrs Forester and Mrs Thompson represent the advance guard of active and conscious women whose mission it was to rescue their sisters from a passive and dependent way of life. Middle-class women in particular were asserting their economic rights both in the home and in outside careers, and the political struggle grew out of the economic. There would be no paradox in arguing that there were also enlightened men like Patrick Lawrence who were equally keen to see women's rights both in the home and in outside careers, and the political struggle grew out of the economic. There would be no paradox in arguing that there were also enlightened men like Patrick Lawrence who were equally keen to see women's rights both in the home and in outside careers, and the political struggle grew out of the economic. There would be no paradox in arguing that there were also enlightened men like Patrick Lawrence who were equally keen to see women's rights both in the home and in outside careers, and the political struggle grew out of the economic.

Such would probably be the thesis put forward by the better-informed writers on the subject. If Dr Harrison set out to revise it he does not say so, for he avoids confrontation and treats his readers as though they were ill-informed seminar audience who will understand the implications of what is said. He simply unfolds his own analysis of the "Antis" in a series of steps which by the end form a crooked zig-zag story, much more convincing than the straight line of reform which we thought.

Separate Spheres is a highly original and illuminating book, but by no means easy to absorb. Dr Harrison has the gifts of the "splitter" rather than the "lumper". He can see and classify many more sides to events than a less imaginative historian would detect, but the reader is left to work hard weighing up and relating a great variety of factors.

Dr Harrison divides the history of the Antis into two phases, of latent and organized opposition. So long as there was no practical prospect that the suffrage campaign would bear fruit, its opponents were hardly stirred apart from an occasional flurry of activity in Parliament or the press. But after 1900 the rise of the Pankhursts and a shift of opinion in the Commons forced the Antis to mobilize. In 1910 Lord Cromer and Curzon took the lead in forming the National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage, a pressure group which survived until Curzon abandoned resistance in 1918. The cause was lost, though Birkenhead, Churchill, Austen Chamberlain and others were found lying very low in the last ditch in 1928.

Latent opposition, a mass of vague and inarticulate tendencies,

is necessarily hard to analyse, but Dr Harrison has sifted biographies and periodicals, papers to good effect. He identifies four strands of thought or, as he prefers to call them, ideal types. One of these is confusing, for it consists of politicians who in principle favoured votes for women, but objected to the provisions of particular Bills. The pre-1918 franchise was a restricted one. If women were given the vote on the same terms as men, as the suffragists demanded, this would enfranchise women of property and benefit the Conservatives. Hence a number of liberal politicians, including Lord George, opposed anything short of universal adult suffrage. Another strand of opposition was provided by the instinctive conservative who disliked democratic and reforming movements in general, and hence the women's movement in particular. In party terms the bulk of the opposition was provided by the Conservatives, but there were powerful cross-currents. All Conservative leaders from Disraeli onwards were in favour of votes for women, whereas most Liberal leaders were against. There were also authoritarian Liberals who placed efficiency above democracy: "With aristocratic and Anglican power severely tested, Liberals like Bryce, Dicey, Macadam, and others, Stephen were free to turn against the democracy on whose political aid they had earlier relied."

But the two most revealing chapters of the book locate the heart of resistance in the sexual attitudes of the period. The strong obstacle was a widespread belief, to be found among both sexes and all classes, in a division of labour between men and women ordained either by God or the laws of nature. Innate sexual differences were exaggerated and held to justify a separation of spheres. Antis were often ready to stress virtues and qualities they regarded as natural to women, and encourage the entry of women into universities and the professions. But women were regarded as intellectually, emotionally and biologically inadequate in the sphere of government. Doctors in particular were fertile in the production of pseudo-scientific theories of female inferiority.

Many years ago Halévy argued that the chief disqualification of women was their inability to bear arms, and Dr Harrison shows how the argument of a "physical force" was often employed. The doctrine was reinforced by the rise of Empire, a male kingdom resting on the capacity to dominate and, if need be, to fight. International rivalry seemed to heighten the need for a strong government, and Lord Cromer warned: "The German man is manly, and the German woman is womanly... can say so, for he avoids confrontation and treats his readers as though they were ill-informed seminar audience who will understand the implications of what is said. He simply unfolds his own analysis of the "Antis" in a series of steps which by the end form a crooked zig-zag story, much more convincing than the straight line of reform which we thought."

The Antis also incorporated the sentiments of clubland: a world with strongly negative attitudes towards women. The all-male club was the place of refuge for men who remain emotionally tied to the comradeship of the school playing field or the college common room. Bachelors at heart and often in fact, they were on the defensive and anxious to keep women in their place, which was certainly not in that best of all clubs, the House of Commons. Dr Harrison

is thoroughgoing in his overall revision of the significance of the suffrage issue. He is not, of course, attacking feminism but deflating the mythology of Parliament of which the suffragettes were themselves victims. In the nineteenth century the most magical powers were attributed to Parliament, as they once had been to the just king. In 1831 William Cobbett argued that a reform of Parliament would give the labouring man a cow and pig, bread and cheese and a bottle of beer, and freedom from oppression. The vote was, of course, a symbolic recognition of citizenship, important for self-respect and with some real influence. But the Pankhursts believed in its transforming power and it is unhistorical to perpetuate this idea, or to neglect the moderate suffragists who built up the case in a more sober fashion. The Antis began with most of society on their side, and the shift from traditional to modern ideas has taken place slowly and for the most part outside Parliament. The war between the suffragettes and the police has distracted attention from a deeper process: the repudiation of one generation's beliefs by the next.

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This history of Belgium and the Netherlands is the first major study in English to treat them as nations in their own right, while placing them in a wider European and world context. Stress is laid on the profound ideological divisions within the two countries, and on the connections between the ideas and realities of politics and society. £15 Oxford History of Modern Europe

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Constance Babington Smith

John Masfield is best known as a poet of the sea, but this first full-length biography, published in the centenary year of his birth, shows that he was equally a celebrant of the English countryside. The book is a rounded and highly enjoyable portrait of one of the best-loved English poets: one whose reputation has been in the doldrums for far too long. Illustrated £8.50

The Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay

Sir George Otto Trevelyan

This is an unrevised paperback reprint in one volume of the classic work first published in 1876, which has been out of print since 1975. In his preface to the 1932 edition G. M. Trevelyan wrote that his father had picked and chosen among his uncle's letters and journals so as to make the book good reading, but he has not picked and chosen to hide Macaulay's failings or to make him in his habit as he lived. Paper covers £3.95

Ombudsmen Compared

Frank Stacey

This is the first comparison of the operations of Ombudsman systems in Britain, Scandinavia, Canada, and France. The author has interviewed Ombudsmen and their staff, analysed their annual reports, their case reports, and other documentary material. In addition, the book examines the key controversies about the British Ombudsman system since 1967, and suggests ways in which the Parliamentary Commissioner, the Health Service Commissioner, and the Local Commissioners could be made more effective and accessible. £10

The Fishing Industries of Scotland 1790-1914

Malcolm Gray

This book covers the period during which Scotland became one of the main fishing powers of Europe, a period when, in spite of the increasing domination of heavy industries, fishing accounted for a considerable proportion of the national income. £7.50 University of Aberdeen

To the Editor

Post-Modernism

Sir—It is with a deep sense of scholarly obligation and an utter predictability that I answer Professor Reynier Danham's silly review of my "silly" book on Post-Modern Architecture (November 17). The silliness is not in dispute: as a former student of the Professor I have always tried to follow his example as best I could, so if there is any silliness in my book then he, not I, should take the credit (besides the Monty Python he credits).

The problem is that Professor Danham takes Philip Johnson and all his silliness too seriously; if only he would take his eyes off this entertaining conjuror for a moment and look at the rest of the Post-Modernists—Charles Moore, Ralph Erskine, Bruno Zevi, to name three—he would see more substantial issues at stake: questions of historical memory, participation, urban appropriateness, etc. In short, the way Modern architecture failed to communicate as intended and the way its successor has tried to remedy this both by using conventional cues including ornament, and by trying to bring back most of the things Modern architecture scrubbed off and throw

away (during its Vacuum Cleaning Period). Being a sometime exponent of the well-scrubbed machine aesthetic he, like many Modernists, has difficulty both in seeing that an era has ended and in focusing on what has replaced it. This haziness of vision is widespread among Modern architects which is why, in my book, I have tried to be ultra-clear and too-obvious about the new language of Post-Modern architecture. Again and again it is defined as a form of "double-coding": half modern and half something else—traditional, local, vernacular, or whatever is locally relevant. The reason for this "double-speak" is not that "White-Man speak with fork tongue" or hypocrisy, but that most people, most societies are partly modern and traditional and so their architectural language is hybrid. This does appear as nonsense and silliness to those who still speak in the purified old language of simplified, Modernistic Esperanto, fumigated as it is of all historical memory and richness, but it does not cause any problems to the young designers who accept the Classical language, which they see ornament, and by trying to bring back most of the things Modern architecture scrubbed off and throw

eclecticism comparable to that of the Queen-Anne Revival and Edwardian Free Style. I hang on about these megasillious points because, as mentioned, Danham's review totally avoids understanding them in his attempt to make Post-Modernists into "post-graduate weirdos" who lack the "courage" to reject Modernism totally. Such silly caricature typifies the Modernist's misunderstanding of the current eclecticism, or that some less than consequential usage of the keyword in 1964 amounts to a major definition. I'm once again grateful to my former Professor for accentuating these ridiculous points and for the vigour, wit and silliness with which he upholds them.

CHARLES A. JENCKS, Architectural Association School of Architecture, 34-36 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3EG. PS: He is right, this style is catching.

Frank Pick

Sir—Noel Carrington's suggestion (Letters, November 17) that it is time someone undertook a Life of Frank Pick can be easily answered: we publish Christopher Barman's *The Man Who Built London Transport: A Biography of Frank Pick* on March 29, 1979.

DAVID ST JOHN THOMAS, Chairman, David and Charles (Holdings) Ltd, Brunel House, Newton Abbot, Devon.

Train Journeys

Sir—I am compiling an anthology of railway journeys in trains of all kinds (transcontinental, private, royal and presidential, prisoner of war and troop, branch line, etc.), both in fact and fiction. All suggestions gratefully received.

LUDOVIC KENNEDY, 3 Upper Dean Terrace, Edinburgh 4.

Book Design

Sir—I am sorry Martin Goff (November 17) is upset by remarks about the way the National Book League has for many years run its annual Book Design and Production show. I had overlooked that, for the first time this year, publishers and selectors had been given some criteria to guide them.

Unfortunately the 150-word document consists mainly of generalizations and cannot remotely be described as "very firm". There is no mention of specific points to be examined: grain direction, weight and opacity of paper, matching of endpapers with text paper; bulk of signatures and the bearing this has on accurate folding and the final shape of the book; sharpness of blocking and precision of square; suitability of type and paper; quality of film or digital composition, particularly in small and large sizes; typography in terms of even spacing, relation between leading and spacing, word-divisions, type size and measure, format and type areas;

imposition; proper make-up, including the avoidance of widows; harmony between format and bulk, between weight and thickness of boards and book-block; relationship between graphic and typographic elements.

In trying to find objective ways to judge quality, such a list could be considerably expanded; and if it were used as a yardstick, designers and book producers might learn to avoid some of the errors so frequently made. The selectors themselves castigated these forcefully in their introduction to the current catalogue.

HANS SCHMOLLER, Steading, Town Place, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 5UG.

Orson Welles

Sir—Stanley Kaufmann's review of my book, *The Theatre of Orson Welles*, 34-36 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3EG, is accurate (November 10). To hear him tell it, I "skimp on dates and on names and locations of theatres". The fact is, each of the Welles productions that I discuss is identified in the Table of Contents (page 7) as to exactly where and when they opened. The complete cast lists for all of Welles's stage productions with the WPA and his own Mercury Theatre are listed in Appendix A (pages 181-9).

He also attributes to me such quotes as "Guthrie was a very precious director vis-à-vis that sort of thing" (page 43). As is clearly indicated in the text, that remark was made by John Hoyt, who, with Welles, was an actor in the Katherine Dunham's production, *McClintock*, during 1933-34.

There was no film footage of Welles's production of *Horace Eats Hat*; nor is any mentioned in my book. Where, then, did Mr Kaufmann come across this information?

In my book that I am interested in Welles only up to the point at which he leaves for Hollywood to make *Citizen Kane*. To be sure, Welles would return to the stage several times during the 1940s and 1950s, but not with the absolute creative authority which he exercised during his Mercury and WPA days. Even with *Native Son*, so close in time to the earlier productions, Welles's control was not nearly so all-encompassing as in the past.

RICHARD FRANCE, Lawrence University, PO Box 599, Appleton, Wisconsin 54911.

Nietzsche

Sir—In my review of J. P. Stern's *Nietzsche* (October 20), I did not mean to suggest, as he intimates in his letter of October 27, that the book was indebted to articles that do not exist. I am sorry I cannot apportion to such heights of absurdity. Rather than retract my statement, as he invites me to do, I would prefer to clarify and substantiate it.

By "articles" I meant his three essays in the publications mentioned in his acknowledgments, and by "previous published material" I meant those essays as well as his essay on Nietzsche (not acknowledged by him) in *Idylls and Realities* (1971) which provides source material (pages 201-203, 209n, 210) for Chap-

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The advertisements trailed along the arterial road: Bungalows and a broken farm, short chukky grass. Where a hoarding had been pulled down, the great ruined sails gaping.

Obviously, a standard piece of 1930s verse, Auden-esque in style and substance, as is confirmed by Bernard Bergonzi's careful analysis in *Reading the Thirties*: he notes the portentous use of "ruined" rather than "broken" as typical of Auden and his imitators. But it isn't verse at all, it is a sentence from *Brighion* lost out as verse. This is the most surprising discovery in a study which turns out to be as much about Graham Greene as about Auden. Each has expressed admiration for the other, but there is no doubt that Auden's priority as Professor Bergonzi says, "he devised, without intending, a code in which other, less talented poets could express their fears and anxieties and hopes through the veil of sustained historical allusion." More unusually, even a talented novelist could find this code useful for describing the contemporary world.

DAVID S. THATCHER, Department of English, University of Victoria, PO Box 1700, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada V8W 2T2.

Mass-Observation

Sir—Charles Madge has checked his cuttings and doubts if there was in his published observations on *Mass-Observation* "much, if any, praise or dispraise of 'the people's art' and proletarian fiction". If the young Madge had hung on to all his places the old Madge would have had less trouble recalling his youthful self (in my phrase) "grabbing the people's art that Mass-Observation techniques were supposed to uncover". He did so in his *Poetic Description and Mass-Observation* (New Verse, No 24, 1937, "Mass-Observation is a technique for obtaining objective statements about human behaviour. . . . Poetically, the statements are also useful. . . . produce a poetry which is not, at present, restricted to a handful of aesthetic performers").

And again in his and Humphrey Jennings' *They Speak for Themselves: "Mass-Observation and Social Narrative", Life and Letters Today*, Volume 17, No 5, 1937 ("reports . . . for Mass-Observation come largely from people whose behaviour, language and viewpoint are far removed from academic science and literature. Sociologists and realistic novelists—including proletarian novelists—find it difficult if not impossible to describe the texture of this world. After reading hundreds of *Mass-Observation* reports, we find that they tend to cover just those aspects of life which others miss").

VALENTINE CUNNINGHAM, Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

Dynevor Castle

Sir—I do not think that Richard Usborne (in his review of Violet Powell's *Margaret Countess of Jersey*, November 17) ought to say that Dynevor Castle is his book.

J. D. K. LLOYD, Bron Hafren, Garthmyl, Montgomery, Powys SY15 6RT.

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gondzi quotes a few lines from Dylan Thomas's profound poem "Our Eunuch Dreams" (beginning "In this our age the gunman and his moll . . .") but this work does serve far more analysis than it receives. There seems to be a need for a whole book on the subject of the film and poetry, which Bergonzi would be well qualified to write. In this book, after the appearance of *Greenland*, there is an anticlimactic discussion of politics and a not very convincing attempt to draw the various threads together. But in his last chapter, as at all points where he makes a critical judgment, Bergonzi shows unfailing taste. He ends by awarding the highest praise to MacNeice's *Autumn Journal*, which he considers to be "one of the outstanding achievements of the thirties"; indeed, one of the few unmitigatedly good long poems in English of this century". He is surely right.

Stephen Spender, though not of the calibre of MacNeice or Auden, is a distinguished poet; the quotations from his early verse by Bergonzi stand up well in the test of time. He is also a dedicated man of letters and as joint editor of *Horizon* and *Encounter* has done a considerable service to literature. In *The Thirties and After* he has reprinted some reviews he wrote before 1940, adding extracts from his *Journal* for various years between 1939 and 1966 (all of which have been published previously in periodicals) and ending with obituaries of his old friends Eliot and Auden, and verses on the death of Comyns and MacNeice. Some of this is interesting as first-hand testimony, but as literary criticism and descriptive prose the book is somewhat lacking in immediacy and force. Spender has been everywhere and met everyone in the literary world, on both sides of the Atlantic, but his impressions of other writers are often slightly out of focus, and for liveliness his personal memoirs are not to be compared with Isherwood's. Shining through the haze, however, are his admirable curiosity and true kindness.

There is, for example, the simple fact that several of the writers worked in the movie industry, notably Isherwood, Dylan Thomas, and Auden himself. I learn from the introduction to *The English Auden* by Edward Mendelson that Auden briefly worked for the GPO Film Unit under Griesbach as a writer, but as assistant director and odd-job man. Mendelson suggests that "his colleagues may have hesitated to give him greater responsibility: when he directed a brief shot of a railway guard, the guard dropped dead a minute later." Auden left one good poetic script in *Night Mail*, and I am sure that there is a cinematic quality in his best work of the period and perhaps of later periods, though this remains to be demonstrated. Ber-

critical quarterly

Volume 20 Number 3 Autumn 1978

Features in this autumn issue include:

Miriam Allott on Graham Greene
Terry Eagleton on literature and politics
Philip Roberts on Tom Stoppard: serious artist or alien?
Poems by Ted Hughes and R S Thomas

Full details of the sixth-form poetry competition, closing date 31st December 1978, can be found in this issue.

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By Geoffrey Hosking

MICHAEL MEERSON-AKSENOV and BORIS SHRAGIN (Editors): *The Political, Social and Religious Thought of Russian "Samizdat"*. An Anthology. 624pp. Belmont, Mass: Nordland. \$20.50.

The appearance, not so long ago, of the *Samizdat* symposium *From Under the Rubble*, edited by Solzhenitsyn and Shatrovich, elicited a rather muted and uncertain response in the West. The uncertainty was probably caused by the fact that the collection represented, in effect, the middle of a debate which had been going on for some years in the Soviet intellectual underground. The reader coming unprepared to it sees names and concepts being hurled back and forth without introduction or explanation, arguments taken up half-way through and then broken off inconclusively a little further on. The inflated Westerner may well be excused for deciding that the whole thing is either trivial, abusive or completely above his head.

In fact, however, there is good reason for paying attention to what is being said. The debate follows the perceived failure of the "democratic" or "civil rights" movement in the Soviet Union in the mid and late 1960s. The outburst of protests and open letters dating from the trial of Sinyavsky and Danil in February 1966 died down during 1969-70, following the Warsaw Pact occupation of Czechoslovakia and the throttling of the reform movement there. Hopes of influencing the Soviet government to adopt the kind of legality embedded in its own constitution had been shown to be illusory, at least for the foreseeable future. Opposition groups began to draw in upon themselves, to reflect on what they had learnt, and also to formulate programmes for the future—something everybody had refrained from doing during the protest campaigns, in the interest of unity. And indeed the formulation of programmes does soon bring to light considerable differences of opinion. Some of the fruits of this debate are already well known in the West: Amalrik's *Will the Soviet Union Survive until 1984?*, Roy Medvedev's *On Socialist Democracy*, Sakharov's *My Country and the World*, Solzhenitsyn's *Letter to the Soviet Leaders*, and *From Under the Rubble*. However, important links in the chain have been missing, and it is the major contribution of this anthology to give us a much fuller picture than has hitherto been available of the variety of viewpoints represented in Russian *samizdat* thought (apart from a brief section on the Jews, the book does not attempt to cover the non-Russian nationalities). The only two trends some will be surprised not to find here are orthodox Marxism-Leninism and the New Left—for the perfectly good reason that the first is no longer capable of engaging in genuine debate, and the second scarcely exists in the Soviet Union.

For all its many-sidedness, however, this anthology does have a focus, and that is a collection of articles written in 1969-70 and circulated under the general title of *Metanoia*. (It was against some of these articles that Solzhenitsyn directed his polemics in *From Under the Rubble*.) The title means "change of heart" or "repentance" in ecclesiastical language. In the introduction, the editors, Solzhenitsyn and Shatrovich, are signalling their indebtedness to Sergei Bulgakov, who used it in an essay of 1911, and to the pre-revolutionary symposium *Zemlyamarks* (Vekhi), which called on the Russian intelligentsia to study the failure of the 1905 revolution not just in order to learn narrow lessons of political tactics, but to unearth within themselves deeply rooted spiritual defects which made them incapable of genuinely creative work, even in the interests of the nation, whom they so much wanted to serve. Two generations later, in the late 1960s, the same questions suddenly seemed very immediate: once again, by that time the Russian intelligentsia had played a major part both in creating the Soviet communist regime and in leading a kind of opposition to it. But neither communism nor the

attempts to restrain it had succeeded, certainly not in the ways envisaged. In fact the intelligentsia was, if you like, recapitulating its historical failure over and over again. The contributors to *Metanoia* attempt to diagnose this failure. O. Altayev (most of the names are pseudonyms) sees the fundamental weakness in the intelligentsia's persistent tendency to espouse utopian and even eschatological visions, utterly unrealistic in practice, but temporarily very intoxicating. V. Gorskii traces the phenomenon deep into Russian history, to the idea of "Moscow the third Rome": Russian governments and intellectuals, he feels, in unholily symbiosis (and even while loathing each other) have constantly revived the secularized messianism contained in monk Filofei's doctrine. This secularized messianism inevitably degenerates, in Gorskii's view, into crude power politics: hence the persistent tendency for Russian religious ideals to turn into an overbearing and ruthless imperialism—a tendency which both the Tsarist and Soviet regimes amply exemplify. Altayev sees the latest version of this temptation as "technocracy", the idea of a modernized, rational, prosperous and well-organized society, which has gripped wide circles of both officialdom and intellectuals in the 1960s and 1970s. K. Zhitenkov, indeed, maintains that the Democratic Movement failed precisely because it took on this "technocratic" bias, close to Khrushchev's brand of reform communism, whose aims were self-contradictory and in any case unacceptable to most of the party-state apparatus.

Discontented with the existing regime, but having no independent ideas to fall back on, the intellectual in the eyes of Altayev, is condemned to a "dual consciousness"—or more or less what Orwell called "doublethink". He suppresses what his conscience tells him, for the greater good of the people or the state; he denies obvious truths because they do not accord with the ideology; and in the end, in fact, he does these things for no better reason than that the state is his employer and to do otherwise means losing his livelihood in a hopeless cause.

The profoundest contribution to the debate which *Metanoia* aroused is an essay of 1973 by D. Neldov, which addresses itself directly to the problem of "doublethink". Neldov asserts that it is wrong to regard the Democratic Movement as having been a failure, for its nature was not really political at all. It was therefore its achievements cannot be measured in political terms. It was more of a spiritual witness, an existential demonstration of the fact that it was possible

to live without "doublethink". The Soviet system Neldov describes as an "ideocracy", that is to say (literally) "rule by an ideology". It is not the actual meaning of the ideology that is important, simply the fact that it exists, and that it is, in the words of Khrushchev and Brezhnev, ideological commissions and five-year plans, editors of *Pravda* and Marshals of the Soviet Union all come and go, glorified puppets, but the ideology remains, a system not meaning but of programmed stimulus and response—stimuli emitted by the regime, responses evoked in the population—the whole permanent symbolic pageant being presided over by the embalmed figure of Lenin. As a Soviet poster says with unfeigned irony: "Lenin is more alive than all the living." (This vision, incidentally, is what underlies the huge recent novel, tract, treatise, or whatever one should call it, of Alexander Zinoviev, *The Waning Heights*, soon to be published in English.)

"Ideocracy", then, is a strange and unexpected confirmation of Marx's concept of "reification": man's ideas stand over against him and oppress him. Perhaps we should not be all that surprised, bearing in mind the historical example of the medieval Catholic Church and the Calvinist city-state. But if the concept corresponds to reality, then the way to fight such a system is not to grapple with its external manifestations, but rather to reassert the human individuality, to assert the individual's right to stand against the system, to demand that the system be changed. This is what Neldov argues, the Democratic Movement did. People said what they actually thought: that was the essence of the matter. Once that began to happen on a more than negligible scale, and once it became widely known, then the mechanism of stimulus and response was shown up as bogus (as most people had dimly suspected all along: "doublethink", after all, is a tribute to the residual sense of reality that most people retain, otherwise the result of "ideocracy" would be "monothink"). If ideas can enslave men, ideas can also free them.

Emancipation from "ideocracy", the reassertion of one's spiritual integrity, is certainly, consciously or unconsciously, the preoccupation of nearly all the writers represented in this anthology. Of course their searches take them along different paths. For Chazhize the notion of the "free personality" must receive clear social expression in the consistent application of the rule of law. For others, where difficulties have been enumerated in exhaustive treatises from which only a sample can be given here. For Lev Voinov (pseudonym of one of the editors, Boris Shargin) the essential is to think clearly and produce volume after volume, to "bring our contribution to national and world culture, converting our tragic existence into univer-

sal knowledge, experience and form"; in other words to do precisely what the intelligentsia is well equipped to do, instead of dabbling in schemes of universal salvation. Others have seen their mission as being to rescue Russian national culture from the *Gleichschaltung* attempted by an ostensibly internationalist communist state. This has sparked off some sharp disagreements about the nature of the Russian heritage: Solzhenitsyn in *From Under the Rubble* attacked Altayev and Gorskii for what he saw as their contemptuous attitude towards national traditions. But his thought too derives from Vekhi and ascribes great importance to "repentance", so the differences may be more apparent than real. At any rate, those who think Solzhenitsyn a million years away will find here a sample of the genuine article, an outburst of red-blooded Russian chauvinism, thickened by autiscentism, worthy of the lampoons of the pre-revolutionary Black Hundreds. This is not a serious contribution to any dialogue, but it is as well that the Western reader should be reminded that this kind of current exists in the Soviet Union. Sakharov and Medvedev have both expressed the fear that it may form the basis for a post-communist regime.

Many Russian intellectuals in recent years have sought their identity in the Orthodox Church, and asserted the right of the intelligentsia to be devoted to their dilemmas. Many of them (including Solzhenitsyn) have been disappointed by the church's apparent servility to the atheist state and have suffered agonizing doubts about the nature of their new-found refuge. Mikhail Meerzon-Aksenov provides a long historical disquisition, and takes his explanation back a very long way indeed, to the origins of the Byzantine church. Ever since Constantine, he argues, the church has had to partake of the functions of the state and has thereby taken on pagan and gnostic features. It is not just that it has become more like the state, but also that it has suffered an internal split between the laity, who turn into the church building to take their routine and passive part in the service, and the clergy, who act as though they possessed exclusive and superior knowledge of the mysteries of the church dogmas. Those who wish to cultivate genuine holiness have to withdraw from the worldliness of the church into the monasteries. Thus secularized and weakened ever since the fourth century, the church has been bound, and all too often subjugated, to the Byzantine, Muscovite, Russian and Soviet states in turn: as the final luxury of the hierarchy has found it possible to accommodate itself even to the doctrinal atheism of the Soviet system. These arguments draw to some

extent on Slavophile thinking of the nineteenth century, but they extend it drastically, applying to the Orthodox Church some of the criticisms the Slavophiles made of the Roman Catholic Church. What Meerzon-Aksenov says is in fact a more reminiscent of the decline of late medieval heresies: the only way out for a demoralized church is seen as a return to a primitive and scriptural Christianity, still suffused with the unwelcome spirit of Christ himself. It is possible, indeed, that something analogous to the Reformation may take place in the Orthodox Church as a result of the encounter of these new intellectual converts with an entrenched ecclesiastical hierarchy in the shadow of the Soviet state. If so, it will be one that seeks not to split the Orthodox Church, but rather to open it to reunion with other Christian churches: fear of isolationism and narrow-mindedness, the desire to forge links and create a broader culture, are a constant theme of these essays. From this point of view, I regret that the editors did not include something more substantial by Grigory Pomerantsev than the rather (for him) superficial article developed here. Pomerantsev has developed at length in recent essays his notion of the intelligentsia as the inheritors of the popular culture that used to reside with the *narod*. As he sees it, it is only in the context of such a culture that the intelligentsia can be formed strong enough to withstand the pressures of the totalitarian system, and he has speculated that a new existential and ecumenical religion may even arise out of the unique and critical situation in which Soviet intellectuals find themselves.

Altogether, this is a most informative and stimulating anthology, part of the excellent work which the Nordland publishing house has been doing in recent years in making important and unfamiliar Russian materials available in English. It is unfortunate, therefore, to have ended on a note of purely technical criticism, but it must be said that the translation is very uneven, and often reads like the kind of "approximate English" one associates with translators rendering a text into a foreign language. The editor, reader, will naturally be anxious to work out the meaning of any passage, but a clearer and smoother English could surely have been produced.

All the same, this is a work which will need to be constantly consulted by anyone interested in the development of underground thought in the Soviet Union, and in the range of texts and the contemporary consciousness and clarity of its commentators it excels anything hitherto published in the West.

have been expected to be pleased to see five of my own works, but the reader who ploughs through them in this context is likely to find as they contain scarcely a word about the subject of this book.

Professor Dunn makes it even harder for his reader by using distracting idiosyncrasies of style compounded by a distressing habit of misprints. He quotes the Russian titles of books in the text without translations, when the reader needs to understand them to follow the drift of the argument. "Attributed was" "indignity", "the Vatican was" "promoted to react"—these are just a few instances of the sloppiness of language found in the book. Not a single page of the bibliography is free of misprints and there are many in the text as well. One must overlook these shortcomings because of the many merits of the work, and because the amount of care would have made the achievement so much easier to appreciate. One edition for an expanded second edition, with all the errors corrected.

Russian Orthodoxy under the Old Regime (275pp., University of Illinois Press, \$16.50; paperback, \$6.95) is based on papers presented at a University of Minnesota conference in 1976, and is edited by Robert L. Nichols and Theodore George Stavrov.

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